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The Wire

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McDonough Power Cooperative • Macomb, Illinois 61455

McDonough Power celebrates National Lineman Appreciation Day

America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

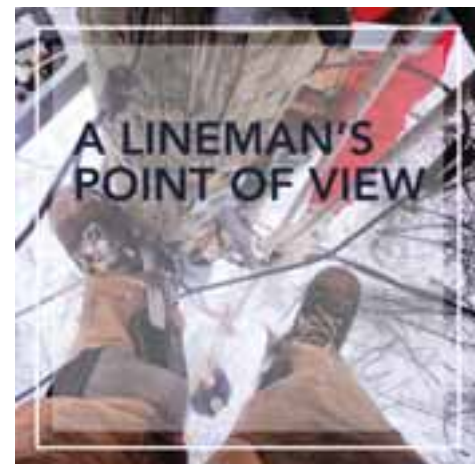
On April 13, 2015, McDonough Power Cooperative will honor the hard working men who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

The full text of the resolution, which the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board adopted unanimously, follows:

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America's Electric Cooperatives.”

We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep



power flowing and protect the public's safety. **7319D8-600C**

“Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve,” said Mike Smith McDonough Power president and CEO. “They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition.”

McDonough Power invites members to take a moment to thank a lineman for the work they do. Use #ThankaLineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.





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Attention budget billing participants Catch-up month is approaching

In June, members who participate in budget billing will be required to “settle up.”

The amount owed in the settlement month will include the actual energy cost for that month, as well as the difference (plus or minus) between the amount paid during the previous budget months and the amount of energy used during those months. **8215C7-852A**

Budget billing members will receive a reminder letter containing specific details.

Not on budget billing, but interested?

You have a couple of options. McDonough Power offers both Budget Billing as well as Levelized Billing. These billing options provide predictable billing throughout a set period of time.

Budget billing is calculated based on your previous 12-month average bill. The amount billed each month will remain the same except for the review month. In June, the balance may be greater or smaller than the budget bill amount, depending on the current

year’s usage compared to the previous year. Because a 12-month average is used to calculate the bill amount, it is required that you have been at the location for 12 months prior to setting up budget billing.

Levelized billing also uses a 12-month average to calculate each month’s bill. However, unlike the budget bill, the 12 months used in the average moves forward each month. By using a rolling average, the amount is not exactly the same each month, but usually varies very little from the yearly average. While levelized billing amounts change some each month, the variation from month-to-month is much less than regular billing. The advantage is that you are able to budget for about the same amount each month, but never have a settle-up month until electric service or the levelized program is discontinued.

For further details, contact our office at 309.833.2101.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Summer is right around the corner! Have you changed your home’s air filter? Filters get loaded with more and more particles as they do their job. This actually has the effect of making them more efficient, but it also increases resistance and reduces airflow. Remember to check filters once a month.

Source: EnergySavers.gov

You have options with programmable thermostats

By Tom Tate

Let's start with a little bit of history. Did you realize that the programmable thermostat is over 100 years old? Honeywell introduced the first programmable thermostat in 1906, naming it the Jewell. It was a simple, clock-powered product that allowed you to establish times for the temperature to go up and down. Anyone who is a fan of the Steampunk style (think Victorian technology and style in modern items and clothes) would be proud to have this device on their walls. While crude by today's standards, it was truly a pioneering product.

The basic programmable thermostat offers four programming periods: wake, leave, return and sleep. You set the time of day and target temperature for each period according to the days of the week. The lowest priced models will offer you a 5-2 day option. Here you set the four periods for the work-week (Monday through Friday) and the weekend (Saturday and Sunday). The next model up will be a 5-1-1 day option. This allows different schedules for Saturday and Sunday. And finally, you can buy a model that allows you to program each day of the week individually. It should be noted that programming each day of the week can quickly become tedious. **532RM405-900A**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established recommendations for proper programming, and over the years, we have seen thermostats that come preprogrammed with their suggestions. Remember the "tedious" comment? Purchasing a

pre-programmed model solves that problem nicely. You can override this programming, but it makes for an easy set up. So what does the EPA suggest? A heating maximum of 68 degrees Fahrenheit and a cooling minimum of 78 degrees Fahrenheit for those times when you are home. They estimate you can save 1 percent on your energy bill for every degree of temperature change when away. On average, expect to save about 10 percent on your annual heating bill.

The size of the temperature change to use when away or asleep is another area of discussion. One camp recommends keeping the range narrow on the theory that the home loses too much of its conditioning and the energy saved is lost as the systems work to get back to the proper temperature. Another says systems run more efficiently when set at a rather modest temperature (cooler for heating and warmer for cooling) and left alone. And the last is the EPA's opinion that a 10 to 15 degree change over an eight-hour period provides the best savings, a change from previous recommendations. A caveat offered by the EPA is that you should not use a programmable thermostat for heat pumps. While fine in cooling mode, they make the heat pump inefficient in heating mode. Specifically designed thermostats are available for heat pumps to overcome



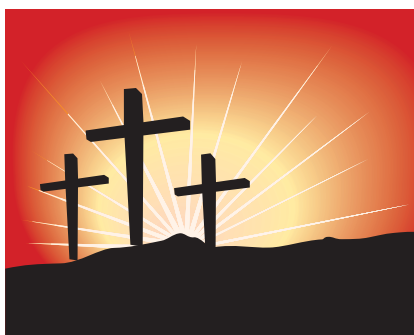
this issue. If you have a heat pump, we recommend one of these.

No discussion of programmable thermostats is complete without getting into their "smart" relatives. This fairly new phenomenon really got traction with the introduction of the Nest.

A smart thermostat can be programmed, but their true appeal lies in the ability to "set and forget" them, allowing their software to build a program around the way you live. Their second major appeal is the ability to interact with them via the Web or your smart phone. While expensive, more choices are hitting the market, so if this is an intriguing idea, keep an eye out as prices are starting to drop. Experimentation will help you determine the best solution for your home as each is different due to insulation, weather sealing, system efficiencies and how you operate you it. That being said, a programmable thermostat will definitely save you money. Pick one of Jewell's descendants today, and start saving.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

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**Our office will be closed on
April 3 for Good Friday**

Have a successful planting season rooted in safety

As farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, McDonough Power Cooperative and the Safe Electricity program (www.safeelectricity.org) urge them to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Operating large equipment near these lines is one of the often overlooked, yet potentially deadly, hazards of working on a farm.

Start by making sure everyone knows to maintain a 10-foot clearance minimum from power lines. “Sometimes a power line is closer than it looks,” says Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council’s Safe Electricity program. “Helpful safety steps include using a spotter and designating preplanned routes that avoid hazard areas.”

Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors now have tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators near power lines, and never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

Simply working too close to a power line is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting objects, such as a ladder, pole or truck. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tires, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination. **8119SL239-864A**

“If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call McDonough Power or 911 for



help,” explains Hall. “If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until help arrives.”

If exiting the cab is absolutely necessary because of fire, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet together, hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

For more tips and information on how to stay safe this planting season, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Safe Electricity is the safety outreach program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization with more than 400 electric cooperative members and many others who share the mission of educating the public about electrical safety and energy efficiency.



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Member Prizes

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